

**Eastern District Innovative Grant Program
Fiscal Year 2006/2007
Additional Development of Home Alone Lessons & Fact Sheets Report**

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The Home Alone Program materials were developed to address the changing needs of families and to be a resource for other agencies working with families. As a result of this project, the Home Alone fact sheets were piloted, specialist reviewed, and are in preparation for posting on the UW-Extension Publications website.

Situation

All families experience the need to assess their child's readiness for self-care during the elementary years. Self-care can mean many things from being in charge for 10 minutes or for longer periods while parents are at work. To help families prepare their children for self-care Family Living Educators in Door, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, and Calumet Counties developed the Home Alone Program in the 1980s. This well-attended program satisfied the needs of families over the years, but materials were outdated. Families possessed less time to attend programs and read materials. The program was drastically modified in response to these changing needs. Sources outside UW-Extension were being utilized for program handouts. In addition, current research needed to be incorporated, and the program content needed to be reviewed. The situation required an individual to organize and simplify materials so they could be used effectively by parents as well as agencies assisting at-risk families.

Response

Family Living Educators in Kewaunee, Manitowoc and Calumet Counties applied for and received district resource management funds to contract with one of the original authors of the Home Alone Program to rewrite the materials. Educators met via Wisline with the project coordinator to identify concepts to include and to review program materials development. These new materials were used in teaching families in fall 2007 and spring 2008. One-hundred families attended programs.

Evaluation Results:

Teacher observations were completed by educators who piloted the Home Alone fact sheets. The teachers found the materials very effective. One teacher commented on their ease of use and believed the parents and youth felt comfortable using them. In this pilot, 87% of the participants completed a

Home Alone plan. Another teacher also commented on the ease of use and liked the single concept fact sheets.

All respondents reported they felt the participants met the class objectives to the degree that a three month follow-up evaluation would be successful. One educator encouraged the future development of a Zoomerang evaluation for this purpose.

Each teacher also made suggestions for additions including the need for discussing stranger danger and parental monitoring. Incorporating guidelines on the use of television and electronic devices was suggested. One educator stated that reduction of paper made the materials more useful for parents, and it reduced office reproduction costs.

The materials were utilized in Kewaunee County by the Department of Human Services in their parent program.

Dave Riley, Rothermel-Bascom Professor of Human Ecology, Department of Human Development & Family Studies, UW-Madison and Child Development Specialist, UW-Extension reviewed the fact sheets and found them accurate and effectively updated.

Further confirming the need for these newly developed materials were other family living educators who inquired about the completion date so they could plan to use the fact sheets.

Evidence

The Home Alone materials were identified for UW-Extension publication status in preliminary discussions with the Family Living Program Director. The Home Alone materials were submitted electronically to UW-Extension Publications in preparation for final public posting. Additional supplementary materials will be made available to UW-Extension staff. Evidence of program success could be measured by future utilization of the developed materials.